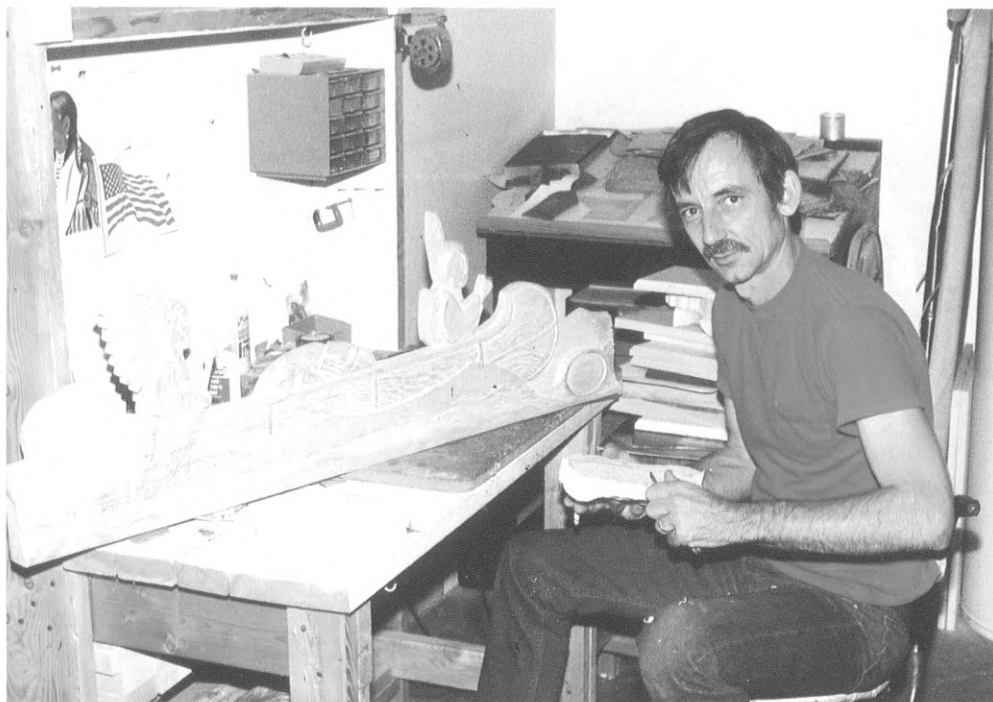


THE DEAF AMERICAN

James Junior— Northwest Artist/Woodcarver



Pictured in his workshop outside Newport, Washington, is James Junior, starting on another Indian chief profile. On his workbench is an Indians-in-a-canoe carving almost completed. (Cover story inside. More pictures on the back cover.)

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THE DEAF AMERICAN

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THE DEAF AMERICAN

The Deaf American is a quarterly publication aimed at the professional community, as well as at the layman who want indepth stories and articles about topics of interest in the deaf community. Libraries, schools, community centers and other information dissemination sources find *The Deaf American* a convenient source of information for patrons and students.

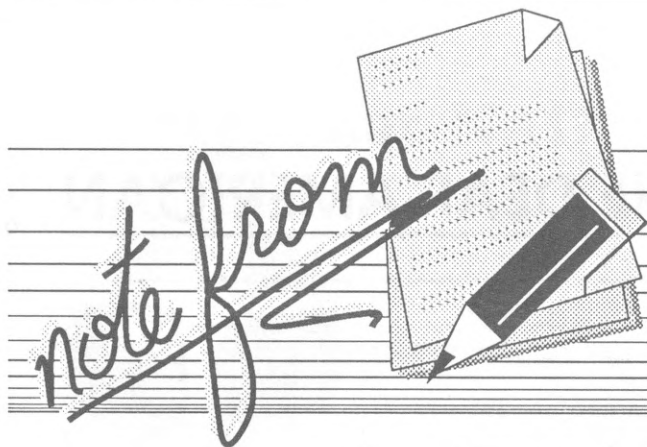
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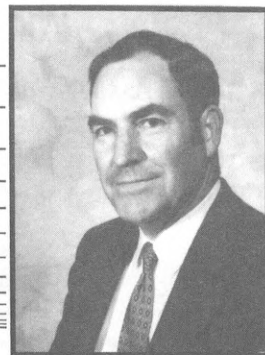
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Editor Jess Smith



The Search Is On . . .

Will the next president of Gallaudet University be a deaf man?

Perhaps so . . . perhaps not. It all depends on two key factors—have enough qualified deaf professionals applied and will they receive merited consideration?

By the time this gets into print, the application process will have been concluded. The screening—and perhaps the interviewing—will have begun. With the incumbent Gallaudet president, Dr. Jerry Lee, leaving by the end of January, the time factor is all-important.

We believe there are qualified deaf applicants for the vacancy, including several with the requisite educational and administrative backgrounds—and with earned doctorates. Certainly, among them would be someone acceptable to the various components of the Gallaudet University family—the staff, the students, the alumni.

No doubt, the number of hearing applicants for the presidency will far outnumber the deaf aspirants. Anytime an opening is advertised for the presidency of a college or university, a deluge of applications results. It is not always clear whether an institution prefers an educator or an administrator; in either case, public relations expertise is imperative.

Some question still persists as to whether or not deaf applicants were accorded due consideration when the Gallaudet presidency was twice open during the past decade. The same uncertainty has been evident when other key administrative vacancies were filled.

All in all, the current selective process in filling the position of president of Gallaudet University is being carefully

watched. Qualified deaf applicants **MUST** be given serious consideration. We shall see!

Commission Winding Down . . .

The work of the Commission on Education of the Deaf is nearing its end. Hundreds of witnesses have appeared before the Commission in hearings across the country. Thousands of pages of documents has been compiled for study. Two draft reports have been issued and printed in the *Federal Register*. Perhaps another will be forthcoming before the final report and recommendations.

The first of the two notices of Draft Recommendations published August 28 contained 18 items; the second issued October 15 had 22 items. Responses to the first set of Draft Recommendations were considered at the Commission's October 27-29 meeting; similarly, responses to the second set of Draft Recommendations will be reviewed at the December 1-2 meeting.

The Commission (COED) is scheduled to make its final report and recommendations in January. While an objective appraisal of the Draft Recommendations is far from easy, because some of them overlap or affect each other, we are inclined to separate them into three broad categories:

1. The conditions and problems in the education and lives of the deaf (or severely hearing impaired, as the term preferred in some quarters);
2. How these conditions and problems are currently being addressed and by whom;
3. Recommendations, both sweeping

and specific, as to possible solutions and by whom, how and sources of funding.

General agreement seems to have developed in respect to the first category although statistics have been challenged and perhaps slanted, depending upon the intent of those offering them.

Considerable fault-finding is apparent in the second category. Questions have been raised as to accountability and rightfully so.

The third category will be concerned with priorities and timeliness, within realistic possibilities of funding and assessment. Will the latter be ongoing; if so, by whom?

A Look at Mainstreaming . . .

Starting on page 12 of this issue, Christine Wixstrom presents a poignant assessment of mainstreaming—"Alone in the Crowd." As our readers are well aware, Public Law 94-142 (and the yet-to-be issued Manual 10) has mainstreaming as the No. 1 option in Least Restrictive Environment.

As stressed in the article, interpreters, notetakers, and tutors can alleviate some problems; however, the social isolation is formidable. The meaningful give-and-take inside and outside the classroom is hardly possible. All too seldom does the total well-being of the individual student, the central figure in mainstreaming, receive deserved consideration.

POETRY

FRIENDS

As we are friends
I see your words
through the silence
of touch, as I
turn away from
you, I am deaf
and my eyes see
every movement
and feel every,
sound that reaches
me inside, using
words and fingers
with emotions and
with love for you
as a friend, and
sharing each others,
desires, makes one
another friendship
special . . .

VISIBLE SARAH

A little white bird
Sat on a post,
Silently invisible space.
There is a visible
beautiful woman; Sarah
her lovely figure on
the rocks; gave a scenic
view of the ocean's
roar, with her small
features dancing with
rhythm and music,
gave its softness
of touch, with her
tiny fingers, dancing
through the ocean's
waves gave its
silent view of her
feelings of the ocean's
music; can you feel
me dancing through
the silence of the
ocean's waves waves . . .

Donna Meyer

See You In

Charleston

July 5-9, 1988



James Junior is a stackerman or fork lift operator for Daw Forest Products in Newport, Washington. He is shown preparing to load a railroad lumber car.

Inspired by Legendary John Clark . . .

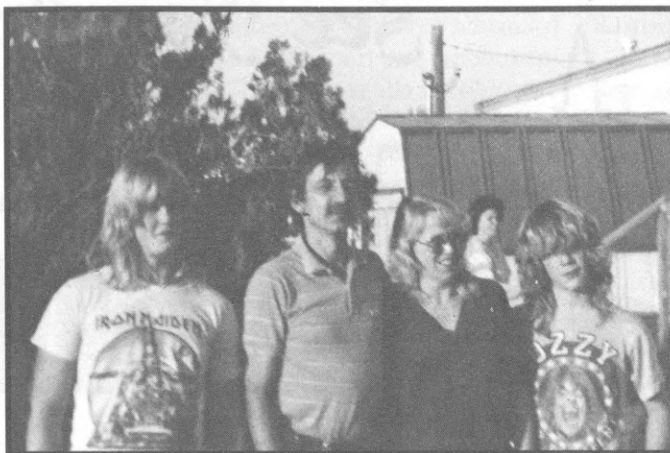
. . . No Formal Training

James Junior: Northwest Artist/Woodcarver

James Junior's "bread-and-butter" job is as a stackerman for Daw Forest Products in Newport, Washington, his employer for the past 21 years. His day shift permits him to engage in another source of income—oil paintings and wood carvings. He also puts in weekends in his shop, 202 North Calispel, Route 1, Box 12, Newport, Washington 99156.

Junior attended the Montana School for the Deaf and Blind for nine years. He left at the age of 15 and held several jobs before going to work with Daw. Now 46, he has two major outlets for his crafts—in a local restaurant display and at nearby art shows.

His paintings and carvings command prices in the \$50-\$300 range. Best sellers are his Indian chief and canoe de-



Jimmy, James Phyllis and Jesse Junior (left to right) pose for a family picture.



Donna Junior (left) with a cousin, Paula. Donna is the only one of the Juniors' children with a hearing impairment.

pictions. His carvings of elk are also very popular.

Junior states that he was inspired by the works of John Clark, the legendary deaf artist and craftsman. Junior had no formal training. He began carving as a hobby and improved his skills until his avocation became a part-time vocation.

Last June the Montana Association of the Deaf celebrated its 75th anniversary at its biennial convention in Great Falls. At the same time, the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind celebrated its 50th year. James Junior pre-

sented a circular plaque inscribed with the school's name and with a hoofs-upraised stallion in the center.

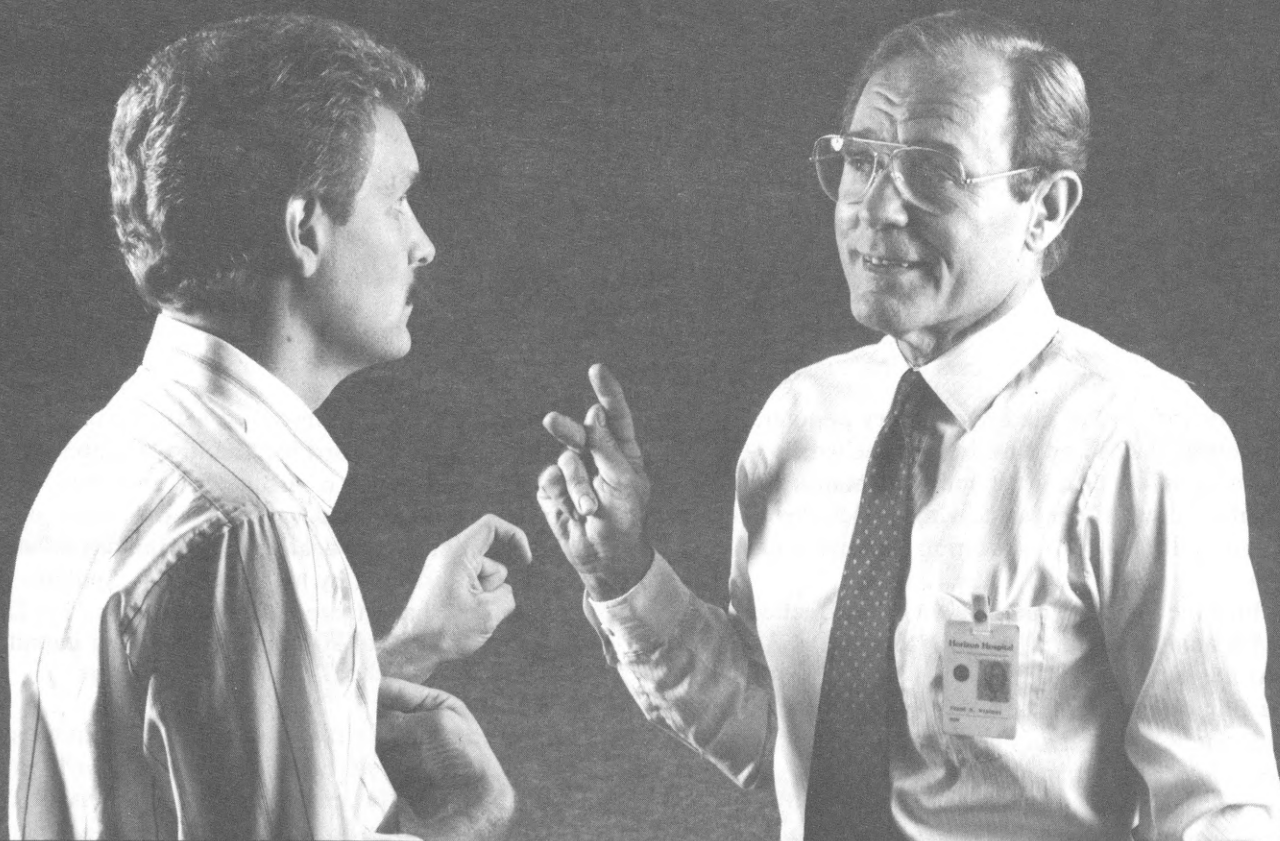
Junior's wife Phyllis is also hearing impaired. A native of Arizona, she attended various schools, with only one year in a school for the deaf. She and Junior met after her father was transferred by his company to Spokane.

The Juniors have three children—Jimmy, 15; Donna, 16; and Jesse, 18. Only Donna has a hearing impairment. All three are high school students in Newport.



This is James Junior's plaque presented to the Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind last summer.

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Dummy Vs. Dummy: A Brilliant Confrontation

By Timothy P. Wayne

On May 16, 1902, a truly unique event in the history of sports occurred. It was the first and only time two deaf professional athletes would compete against one another. Cincinnati provided the stage when Luther Haden Taylor took the mound for the visiting New York Giants. Playing center field for the Redlegs was William Ellsworth Hoy. Although Hoy and Taylor were nicknamed "Dummy" by their teammates, their performances on the field were often brilliant.

Hoy, who began his professional career over a century ago, was in his last season with a major league club in 1902. Even at the advanced age of 41, Hoy was still fleet enough to bat leadoff for Cincinnati. In his career Hoy had acquired fame and fortune while setting many records during seventeen seasons with seven clubs.

Hoy's major league totals are impressive. He collected 2,401 hits during his career for a lifetime average of .288. Hoy's best average in the majors was .318 with Louisville in 1898. He also stole 514 bases, reaching the 500 mark after he turned 40.

Hoy made his greatest contribution to baseball in 1887, during his second season with Oshkosh of the Northwest

League. He grew tired of trying to lipread the umpires so Hoy suggested they raise their right hand to indicate a called strike. Umpires have been doing it ever since. Hoy spent two seasons in the minors before joining the Washington club of the National League in 1888. In his rookie year Hoy led the league in stolen bases with 82 and hit .274.

Although Hoy was a swift base stealer and a steady hitter, he is best remembered for his play in the field. Hoy had a deadly accurate arm that base runners learned to fear. During his second season in Washington with Joe Cronin as his catcher, Hoy etched his name in the record books for all time. On June 19, 1889, Hoy threw out three runners at home plate, a record that stands to this very day.

Luther Taylor was certainly no dummy on or off the field. He had graduated with honors from his high school in Kansas and was named its valedictorian. When he was called up from the Albany farm team in 1900, Taylor was used as both a reliever and a starter. By the end of the year he had earned a spot on a pitching staff that boasted such greats as Christy Mathewson and Joe "Iron Man" McGinnity.

After his rookie year Taylor spent the off season pitching



William Ellsworth Hoy in a Washington (National League) uniform in 1886, his first season in the majors.



Luther Haden Taylor as a New York Giants pitcher in the early 1900's. His best year was 1906, when he won 17 and lost 9 games. He also had a 16-9 record the previous season.

for the San Diego team of the Southern California Baseball League. Taylor won most of his games and even hurled a fifteen inning, 1-0 shutout that was called the greatest game ever played in California. Before returning to the Giants in the spring he was given a gold watch from the players and management in gratitude for his contributions. In only his second season in the majors Taylor won 18 games, over $\frac{1}{3}$ of the Giants victories for that lean season.

At the beginning of the 1902 season Taylor jumped to Cleveland of the new American League in order to make more money. The Giants missed Taylor so they sent his catcher, Frank Bowerman, to Cleveland in an attempt to entice Taylor to return. Taylor was off to a poor start as he lost three of his first four decisions. When the Giants promised him more money the result was predictable: Taylor was back in a New York uniform by May the first.

Luther Haden Taylor's Record

Taken from the *BASEBALL REGISTER* published by C. Spink and Sons, St. Louis, Mo.

Born: February 21, 1876, at Oskaloosa, Kansas

Height: 5 feet 11 inches Weight: 225 Grey eyes and brown hair

Threw and batted right-handed Ancestry: Scotch-German

Year	Club	League	G	IP	W	L	Pct.	H	R	SO	BB	CG
1900	Albany	N. Y. State	18	—	10	8	.556	—	—	—	—	—
1900	N. Y. Giants	National	11	63	4	3	.571	61	26	14	24	6
1901	N. Y. Giants*	National	45	360	18	27	.400	377	198	140	102	37
1902	Cleveland	American	4	34	1	3	.250	37	17	8	—	4
1902	N. Y. Giants	National	25	179	6	14	.300	195	93	84	54	17
1903	N. Y. Giants	National	32	234	13	13	.500	277	139	94	89	18
1904	N. Y. Giants	National	37	396	21	15	.583	235	101	138	75	30
1905	N. Y. Giants	National	32	213	16	9	.640	200	85	91	51	16
1906	N. Y. Giants	National	31	215	17	9	.654	187	82	91	57	14
1907	N. Y. Giants	National	28	166	11	7	.611	145	63	56	16	11
1908	N. Y. Giants	National	27	128	8	5	.615	122	50	50	34	6
1909	Buffalo	Eastern	39	313	16	18	.471	250	93	151	81	—
1910	Buffalo	Eastern	34	257	16	16	.500	201	80	106	63	—
1911	Buffalo-Montreal	Eastern	30	133	6	10	.375	130	75	58	36	—
1912	Montreal	International	30	158	8	8	.500	181	97	49	45	—
1913	Mont.-New Orleans	Southern	7	40	1	1	.500	31	14	3	18	—
1914	Utica	N. Y. State	33	—	—	—	—	212	104	60	79	—
1914	Brantford	Canadian	29	221	10	18	.357	227	111	80	56	—
1915	Topeka	Western										
			(No record available)									
Major League Totals.....			272	1987	115	105	.523	1836	854	766	539	159

*Jumped to Cleveland at start of 1902 season, but rejoined N. Y. Giants May 1, 1902.

G—Games IP—Innings pitched CG—Completed games

William Ellsworth Hoy's Record

Born at Houcktown, Ohio, May 23, 1862

Height: 5 feet 5 inches Weight: 155 Pounds

Threw and batted left-handed Ancestry: Scotch-English

Married Anna Maria Lowrey, October 26, 1898

* Outstanding Performances: Threw out three base-runners at home plate, June 19, 1889. Led National League in stolen bases in 1888, with 82.

Year	Club	League	Pos.	Games	Stolen Bat.		P.O.	A	E	Avg.
					Bases	Avg.				
1886	Oshkosh	Northwest	OF	71	—	.219	102	13	21	.846
1887	Oshkosh	Northwest	OF	116	67	.367	227	19	31	.886
1888	Washington	National	OF	136	82	.274	296	26	37	.897
1889	Washington	National	OF	127	36	.282	255	29	35	.890
1890	Buffalo	Players'	OF	122	—	.299	284	26	28	.917
1891	St. Louis	Am. Ass'n.	OF	139	52	.288	—	—	—	.914
1892	Washington	National	OF	149	60	.280	267	17	40	.877
1893	Washington	National	OF	130	21	.259	282	26	37	.893
1894	Washington	National	OF	128	30	.312	322	37	41	.895
1895	Cincinnati	National	OF	107	50	.274	233	13	35	.875
1896	Cincinnati	National	OF	121	53	.296	307	14	17	.950
1897	Cincinnati	Naitonal	OF	128	40	.292	352	11	24	.938
1898	Louisville	National	OF	148	37	.318	340	27	18	.953
1899	Louisville	National	OF	155	31	.306	333	18	24	.936
1900	Chicago	American	OF	137	32	.254	337	45	9	.977
1901	Chicago	American	OF	130	30	.293	281	16	13	.958
1902	Cincinnati	National	OF	72	12	.294	151	4	11	.934
1903	Los Angeles	P. Coast	OF	211	46	.234	413	26	23	.950
Major League Totals: GAMES A.B. RUNS HITS S.B. B.A. P.O. A E F.A.										
1668 7078 1403 2401 514 .288 4040 309 369 .922										

* William Ellsworth Hoy's Baseball record taken from the 1948 Edition of Baseball Register, published by *The Sporting News*.

Luther Taylor was also baseball's silent jester, the forerunner of today's team mascots. He would use his mime skills to mock the umpires behind their backs to the delight of New York crowds. Taylor often cursed out umpires in sign language and escaped being ejected because the umpires couldn't understand him.

When Taylor's Giants came to Cincinnati, the home team was celebrating the opening of their new concrete stadium. The new manager for the Giants, John McGraw, named Taylor to start the game. Only one umpire, Mr. Cantillon, would make all the calls at home and the other bases.

The veteran Hoy had a good game as he was the only Redleg to collect two hits. Luther Taylor also performed well pitching eight innings and yielding no earned runs. However, a shortstop error allowed three Redlegs, including Hoy, to cross the plate in the eighth to give Cincinnati a 3-0 advantage.

It looked like Taylor's performance would be wasted as he was pulled for a pinch hitter when the Giants came up for one last at bat in the ninth. Fortunately, New York rallied to score five runs and take a 5-3 lead. The Redlegs failed to score in the bottom of the inning and Taylor was given credit for the victory in which he struck out four and walked only two.

Although the Giants and Redlegs met several more times that season, Hoy and Taylor would never face each other again. Taylor pitched in relief against the Redlegs twice, but Hoy had been replaced in center field by a younger player named Seymour.

The following season Hoy played for newly formed Los Angeles team of the Pacific Coast League. He scored the very first run for the Angels and led them to the PCL title. Hoy played in an incredible 211 games that year and stole 46 bases, all at the age of 42. Taylor had his best season in 1904 when he went 21-15 and completed 30 games for New York. He pitched for the Giants through 1908 and then spent eight years in the minors until he retired.

In 1952, William Hoy became the first athlete elected to the newly established Hall of Fame for the American Athletic Association of the Deaf. Neither Luther Taylor nor the truly deserving Hoy have yet been elected to Baseball's Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York. Perhaps in 1988, during the hundredth anniversary of Hoy's rookie season in the National League, this oversight will be corrected.

Yesterday's Baseball Games

CINCINNATI, May 16.—The New York baseball team kept their surprise until the ninth inning of to-day's game with Cincinnati, and then fell on the delivery of Pitcher Hahn with such ferocity that five runs were chalked to their credit before the required three were out. Four single hits, with Lauder's for two bases, caused all the trouble for the local team, and their seemingly insurmountable performance of the preceding inning paled into insignificance, for to the visitors went the game. The score:

CINCINNATI						NEW YORK					
	R	1B	PO	A	E		R	1B	PO	A	E
Hoy, cf	1	2	1	0	0	Van H'n, cf	0	0	4	0	0
Dobbs, 1f . . .	1	1	6	0	0	Smith, 2b . .	0	0	3	0	0
Beckley, 1b . .	0	1	7	1	0	Lauder, 3b . .	1	2	3	3	1
Crawf'd, rf . .	0	0	1	0	0	Jones, rf . . .	1	1	2	0	0
Magoon, 2b . .	1	1	4	5	1	Doyle, 1b . . .	1	0	6	0	0
Coreor'n, ss . .	0	1	1	1	2	Bean, ss	0	2	2	1	1
Steinf'd, 3b . .	0	0	2	2	1	Jackson, 1f . .	1	1	3	0	0
Pietz, c	0	1	5	1	0	Bower'an, c . .	1	2	4	2	0
Hahn, p	0	0	0	0	0	Taylor, p	0	0	0	2	1
*Beck	0	0	0	0	0	Sparks, p . . .	0	0	0	0	0
						†Yeager	1	1	0	0	0
Total	3	7	27	10	4	Total	5	9	27	8	3

*Batted for Hahn in the ninth. †Batted for Taylor in the ninth.

Cincinnati.....	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0—3
New York.....	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5—5

Earned runs—New York, 5. Two-base hits—Lauder, Bowerman. Three-base hit—Bowerman. Stolen base—Smith. Double plays—Lauder to Doyle; Magoon, Corcoran; Beckley to Pletz; Steinfeld to Beckley. First base on balls—By Hahn, 2; by Taylor, 2. Hit by pitched ball—By Taylor, 1. Struck out—By Hahn, 4; by Taylor, 4. Wild pitch—Taylor. Umpire—Mr. Cantillon.

This is a reproduction of the New York Times box score of the May 16, 1902, game in Cincinnati between the Giants and the Reds, the only time when William Ellsworth Hoy as the Reds centerfielder faced Luther Haden Taylor, the Giants starting pitcher. Hoy got two singles and scored one run.

Editor's note: At the Convention of American Instructors of the deaf and the Conference of Educational Administrators Serving the Deaf held in Santa Fe, New Mexico, June 28-July 2, 1987, the CEASD presented A National Forum on Deafness with "Charting a Course" the topic. At the second session, Dr. David M. Denton, superintendent of the Maryland School for the Deaf, Frederick, was the section leader. This paper served as the introduction to "Educational/Social/Technological and Scientific Trends and the Deaf Consumer."

Opening Remarks . . . David M. Denton

Educational/Social/Technological And Scientific Trends . . . and the Deaf Consumer

This forum has perhaps greater significance than we fully realize. This **could be** one of the landmark meetings of its kind. It is impossible to predict, at this point, whether or not this forum will result in a new level of understanding of the deep issues in education of the deaf and an appropriate grappling with these issues, or if it will result in a failed opportunity. History will tell but we shouldn't have to wait for that. In the weeks and months leading up to this forum in Santa Fe, there has been considerable anticipation, and even tension, associated with this gathering and the possible outcomes. In my judgment, however, the one problem which plagues us most seriously is the vagueness, the fogginess, the lack of definable substance of the issues themselves. This absence of clarity as to what the real issues are is coupled with the historical unwillingness of the organizations involved in this forum to confront openly and honestly the issues of the day. There is still pervasive anxiety about offending someone or about appearing to be aligned with one side or the other of the question. Recent history should have helped us understand, however, that perhaps to a greater extent than any time in previous years, educators of the deaf of all persuasions and deaf persons stand together. Unfortunately, we stand with our back to the wall.

In some ways deaf persons in American, and those responsible for their education, represent an at-risk population. More than that we stand the risk of seeing the future of this developing generation of deaf children foreclosed because of the blind and mindless pursuit of a typically American concept initially embraced as a noble dream but which has come to be, in actual practice, an empty illusion at best. Deaf children in America today are experiencing isolation to a greater degree than at any time during this speaker's professional career. Paradoxically, the isolation of deaf children is occurring largely through the misapplication of a concept which promotes the integration of deaf persons into the mainstream. It would seem that we have failed to notice that there has grown and developed in America, and elsewhere, a viable culture in which deaf persons find and enjoy a sense of wholeness and fullness. Perhaps we have failed to notice also that the fullness of life in a free state comes more readily to those who know who they are and who enjoy their

definition of self. Deaf people in America no longer accept the clinical, pathological definition of deafness and insist upon a cultural definition. Deaf people see themselves as a population of Americans tied together by a common heritage, a shared experience, a multi-generational history, and most of all that prize of any culture . . . a language! Educational policy, however, is being framed and implemented on the perception of deaf persons as **handicapped children**.

Handicaps are generally perceived as being impediments to the learning, progress and achievement of persons affected by specific disabilities. Mental retardation impedes the rate and extent of learning and thus limits performance. Deafness places no limitations on intellectual capacity or performance. From an educational, social, cultural point-of-view, the implications of deafness, however, are profound. Generic special education is promoting, with the strongest possible support of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, the placement of deaf children in educational environments which almost ensure an increased or heightened sense of isolation on the part of these children and a deepened sense of being handicapped and different. How this could happen and even be supported is a matter that needs thoughtful and determined deliberation during the course of this forum and beyond. Why such a state of affairs exists is wrapped up in the nature of deafness itself. Deafness alters the process of human interaction and its influence is felt not only by the person experiencing deafness but by all of those persons coming in contact with the deaf individual, whether or not they are aware of or understand how deafness affects them. We simply cannot afford a continuation of the practice under which placement decisions are governed by geography more than they are by the quality of the interpersonal process. Deafness is not going to evaporate simply because a child is separated from other deaf persons and given instruction in the presence of children who can hear! As simplistic as this statement might appear, it may be startlingly close to the core of the problem. We don't have time to debate the question of whether or not there is a deaf culture while the connecting links of this mechanism which has bound deaf Americans together for generations, whatever it is called, is being systematically dismantled.

In an address to the faculty and staff of the Maryland School for the Deaf, Dr. Carol Padden, from the University of California, San Diego, discussed the concept of deaf culture by using the theme "A Different Center." (The Harvard Press is publishing Dr. Padden's book by that same title in the spring of 1988.) Typically, we think of the center of a child's universe as being primarily the family and including other intimate parts of that social, cultural world in which the child finds nourishment and grows. Typically, too, we think of the child as perceiving himself as being near the heart of that center. This phenomenon was delicately illustrated by Dr. Padden as she described the experiences of a deaf child who was a member of a deaf family, as he sought to understand the peculiar (to him at least) behavior of hearing people, particularly the strange way these people communicated. His parents matter of factly explained that these were hearing people and that's the way hearing people behaved. The significant point is that the deaf family occupied a different center . . . not better . . . not worse . . . just different! The structure was intact. There was no preoccupation with the handicap of deafness by this family. On the contrary, deafness was thought of more as a quality to be enjoyed rather than a handicap to be overcome. Unfortunately, for an increasing number of deaf children in America this opportunity for wholeness near the center of that small universe is not readily within reach. Too many deaf children today will remain peripheral to the heart of that social, cultural world which they occupy.

A heritage cannot be passed on unless there are people to pass it on, and the bitter lessons of history clearly tell us that the most certain way to destroy a culture is to isolate its members! This was most effectively done with the various groups of American Indians. The Indian heritage will die unless it is passed on to the next generation by those who are already a part of that culture. Fortunately, in recent years there has been an increasing interest in keeping the native languages alive among a number of different groups of American Indians. In the area where I grew up there has been a dramatic increase in rebuilding and perpetuating the identity of the Cherokee, and we are able to observe a genuine celebration going on among this group of people. Interest-

ingly, today, the Cherokee in my home state seems much more able to enjoy his identity as an American Indian, even though he is substantially more integrated into the broader culture than was true a few years ago. If the Cherokee loses his identity as an Indian, he inevitably will become a peripheral American. There's a lesson in this for us, and it's time we give due credit to the institutions which have been responsible for the transmission of the deaf heritage from one generation to the next.

Barry Goldwater, in his book, *With No Apologies*, tells us that, "If in our minds we mark the dissolution of empire by some singular military defeat we are misreading history. In every case the climactic act has been preceded by internal failures, by a lessening of devotion to principles and beliefs which created and sustained the rise to power and prominence." He goes on to say that, "Great nations do not disappear into the dustbin of history without broadcasting in advance the directions they are taking." I wonder if there has been a lessening of our devotion to the principles and beliefs which created and sustained the rise to a comparative degree of prominence of education of the deaf in America. It doesn't matter if we are talking about the military/economic arena—it doesn't matter if we are talking about government—or if we are talking about individuals—the concept captured in Mr. Goldwater's statement holds true!

The network of schools and educational programs for the deaf must be strengthened and given new vitality. The deaf community in America, by whatever name it is called, has a rich and sparkling history . . . it has traditions . . . and heroes . . . it has substance . . . and vitality . . . and it deserves a future. The pre-eminence of America's deaf culture in comparison with the deaf cultures in any other nation in the world is not the result of an accident. The elevation of deaf people all across America into positions of responsibility in a variety of fields is an indication that somebody did something right! It is well beyond the time when we should have recognized where the strengths of our educational system reside. It seems to me we are duty bound to strengthen and improve upon what has been built over the generations, and not simply destroy an imperfect system on the promise of an empty illusion.

Alone In The Crowd . . .

By Christine Wixtrom

"Let the deaf student join the mainstream!" So goes the cry, based on the assumption that placement at a regular school benefits students more than placement at a special school. Those who advocate "mainstreaming" hope that the deaf student, if educated in "regular" schools, will be able to blend in successfully with hearing peers and feel like a "normal" student. With this expectation, hearing impaired students are being directed away from schools for the deaf and plunged into mainstream education. But is this recommendation based on false hope? Is it realistic to imagine that an individual who cannot hear will become an involved, socially alive student, able to thrive in the natural flow of the mainstream? Or will he inevitably feel like "a goldfish swimming in a bowl, watching the outside action,"* glassed in, shut out, circling wearily in isolation?

Take a look at some hypothetical scenes from inside a high school where a deaf student has been "mainstreamed." Imagine that this student is the perfect candidate for the mainstream experiment. Deafened in his early teens, his communication skills are above average. He already possesses good speech, language and reading skills. In fact, he is singularly intelligent, a voracious reader, and at or above grade level in all content subject. He is outgoing, friendly and eager to become a part of the social mainstream—he even has ambitions for involvement in student government! His attitude toward the public school is positive, and his parents are behind him all the way. Support services (such as interpreters and notetakers) are offered in order to provide equal access to academic opportunities. Most of the teachers are willing to have a deaf student integrated into their regular classes. Free (non-credit) sign language classes are available on campus, for interested students. Some teachers even arrange to have brief sign language lessons presented a couple of times a week within their regular classes, in order to give the hearing students opportunities to learn to communicate with their deaf classmate.

The stage is set. The school environment is favorable, and the student is capable. He enrolls in school and the experiment begins. He is "mainstreamed." But is he in the mainstream? Consider scenes from a typical day.

It's a Monday in May, near the end of the school year. The classroom door is open, and the hearing students are pouring in, greeting their friends and talking excitedly about their weekend experiences. The deaf student slips in silently, sits down alone and buries his head in a book as he waits for class to begin. He cannot hear the buzz of activity and conversation around him. He was not a part of the weekend ac-

tivities. No one speaks to him. He looks up as a girl he likes comes up the row to her seat and drops her books down on the desk. He ventures to speak softly to her, not noticing that she is already talking and joking with a guy across the room. The deaf student finally captures her glance and asks his question, but the girl doesn't understand what he says. (His speech is slightly impaired, and the room is noisy.) After two more repetitions of "How was your weekend?" he is rewarded with a perfunctory "On, fine!" before she turns around and gets wrapped up in a detailed, secret exchange with her best girlfriend, who sits right behind her. They giggle and talk, glancing up once in a while to catch the eye of the boy across the room. The deaf student rearranges the papers on his desk.

Finally, the teacher begins to lecture, and the lively conversational exchanges become subdued. The hearing students settle into pseudo-attentive postures, reverting to subtle, subversive communications with those around them. The deaf student, in his front row, corner seat, turns his eyes on the interpreter. He keeps his focus there, working to grasp visually what the other students are effortlessly half-listening to. The teacher questions a student in the back of the room. Her hearing friends whisper help. Their encouragement boosts her confidence and she boldly answers the teacher. Satisfied, the teacher moves on to question someone else. The first student joins those whispering to the boy who's now on the spot. He picks up the quiet cues and impresses the instructor with his evident mastery of the subject. A peer support system of companionable cooperation helps keep everyone afloat. However, only those with sensitive hearing and social support can tap into this interwoven network of surreptitious assistance. When a pointed question is directed to the deaf student, he is on his own. No student schemes bring him into the "we" of class camaraderie. Instead, when he speaks, the students suddenly stop talking and stare. But he is oblivious to the awkward silence in the room. He is verbally stumbling, searching for an answer that will pacify the teacher, and yet not be too specific. He strains to minimize the risk of opening himself up for the embarrassment of saying something that has already been said, or something that misses the mark entirely. While he is still speaking, the bell rings and the other students pack up and start moving out the back door. The deaf student, his eyes on the teacher, doesn't notice the interpreter's signal that the bell has already sounded. The teacher smiles uncomfortably and cuts him off to give last-minute instructions as the students pour out the door.

(Continued on page 14)

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Between classes, the students race the bells for time to find their friends, catch up on the news, share secrets, common gripes and adolescent enthusiasms for music, social and sports events. Meanwhile, the deaf student quietly makes his way through the thronging crowd to his locker. Unable to hear the gossip, shouting and excited conversations all around him, he just reaches in for the necessary books, slams his locker shut and squeezes along the paths to the next class. He arrives early and sits down among a sea of empty seats to wait for the bell. At the last second, right before the signal sounds, the hearing students tear away from their friends and reluctantly scramble into class.

Today there is a film. The curtains are drawn, the room gives in to blackness and the film rolls. Under cover of darkness, the class comes alive with secret messages and whispered communications. But not for the hearing impaired student. Enveloped in the deeper silence that darkness imposes on the deaf, he keeps the narrow beam of his flashlight focused on the static sentences in the film booklet.

After the film, the teacher asks the students to work together in small groups to discuss assigned topics. Immediately, the hearing students call out to each other and rush to sit with their friends. The teacher tells one group to crack their circle of desks and let the deaf student edge in. As the instructor moves to another part of the classroom, the students lean together and start discussing girls, guys, dates, parties and inside gossip. Through the interpreter, the deaf student "listens" eagerly, hungry for crumbs of information about social goings-on, even though he knows he is outside it all, neither a subject of conversation nor a participant in it.

In the next class, the first five minutes are set aside for the class to practice sign language. The deaf student has been hoping that the sign lessons would provide at least a sparse stock of signs that students could use with him. The presenter demonstrates how to form the signs. A few students follow along, hesitantly imitating these gestures which seem so strange to them. But most of the students just take advantage of a little more time to pass notes, whisper together and strengthen established friendships. Although they have had almost a year of exposure to signing, the deaf student is still waiting for the day when someone, sometime, will approach him for a few words of simple conversation.

Suddenly, a rapid series of pulsing bells blasts into the classroom. Glad for an excuse to get out of class, the students quickly join the mass of people streaming out of all the doorways for the fire drill. The various classes mingle together and the mass of students swarms onto a nearby field. Students find their friends and cluster to chat while they wait for the end of the drill. In the middle of the milling crowd, in a sea of communication, the deaf student thirsts for a drop of conversation. He tries talking with a few people, but when they speak, he cannot understand their words. Impatiently, they turn away, leaving the deaf student to stand alone in awkward silence. When the drill ends, he hurries

back to the room, relieved. The other students return reluctantly to their seats.

As class begins, the teacher asks the students how they feel about something controversial that had happened recently. Hands wave all over the room—everyone has an opinion on the issue. Everyone, that is, except the deaf student. This is the first time he has heard about it. Students keep up a friendly banter, energetically debating points, asking questions, explaining their ideas and sometimes talking all at once. (When this happens, the interpreter can only convey snatches of the debate, by asking the deaf student to choose which of the many speakers he would most like to "hear.") The students are arranged in a circle, so that they can see each other when they speak. But the deaf student makes eye contact only with the interpreter, afraid that if he looks away, he'll lose the drift of what people are saying and miss something important. Indeed, even while paying attention and trying to keep up, he still falls behind, gets lost, misses the jokes, wonders who said what and has to struggle valiantly just to keep track of the conversational ball. While everyone else enjoys the stimulation of group interaction, the deaf student must "listen" through the interpreter, "hearing" everything second-hand and after the fact. He is hesitant about jumping into the discussion, for fear of being off the track or demonstrating poor timing. Besides, it is difficult to collect his own thoughts while straining to follow what others are saying.

Much of his frustration results directly from the need to use interpreters in the public school environment. In a school for the deaf, teachers and students would speak with him directly through visual communication. But here, the sound-based communications must be translated to a visual form for him. While interpreting is useful in this context, the process has many limitations. As fleeting bits of information are interpreted, an idea—expressed eloquently by the speaker—may lose all beauty in the translation. Information which is difficult to understand when listening directly to the teacher can be nearly impossible to grasp when it must be conveyed through an interpreter. In addition, the time lag (after words are spoken) interferes with smooth communication. Despite such limitations, interpreting is a necessary service for the hearing impaired student in the regular school environment. Through interpreters, the deaf student receives academic information presented in lectures and discussions. But when using interpreters, he often finds himself more of a spectator than a participant.

The lunch bell rings. On the quad, under the trees and in the cafeteria, students flock together with their friends. Kids cram into cars for a great time going out to lunch. But the deaf student hasn't been invited to join any of these companionable gatherings. After he finishes his lunch, he looks for something to do. The special lunchtime lectures that are offered on campus several times a month are always popular, but none is being presented today. (Besides, there are no in-

interpreters available during the noon break.) If it were Tuesday or Thursday, he could go to the lunchtime sign language sessions and hope that someone would show up. He has become used to the fact that while the lectures on science, psychology and business may attract two hundred students, the sign language sessions draw only few students, who attend irregularly. Learning a new way to communicate is not a high priority for most students. They are busy with other things. Many of them are active in clubs. There they can get to know each other as they work together on projects, get involved with issues, try out their talents and just have fun. Today, the deaf student wanders into one of the club meetings and watches from the sidelines. He cannot hear what they are saying. He tries to read their lips but can't even surmise the topic they are discussing. Giving up, he goes to the library to lose himself in a book until released from lunchtime loneliness by another bell.

Before the next class begins, the interpreter informs the deaf student that the cluster of boys in the hall are talking about the girls they have dated. The deaf student, wishing he was in their place, can only count the number of girls that have smiled at him, or said "Hi." Unable to communicate with the hearing students, he must content himself with a superficial level of contact with his peers. Because of the communication problems between deaf and hearing people, even making small talk is a frustrating and often unsuccessful struggle. If only he could communicate comfortably with everyone in sign language—maybe then he could make friends. But as things are, he must settle for less. The best he can do is eavesdrop on the social lives of his hearing peers. He continues to "listen in" as the interpreter conveys other hallway conversations. Some students are talking about the TV show they'd seen the night before (it wasn't captioned,

so the deaf student didn't watch it). Another group is discussing the candidates for student government positions (the deaf student has skipped the meeting because he wouldn't have been able to understand what anyone was saying). Others are outlining their plans to get together after school (the deaf student plans which book he'll read in his room at home).

As class starts, the teacher returns papers she has corrected. The deaf student hopes he won't be singled out again as "different." At the first of the year, he had been one of two students in a class who received the same poor grade on a test. The teacher had suggested to the hearing student that he work harder; then he had asked the deaf student if he wanted to move to a less demanding class. It seemed that people suspected that he might be "dumb" as well as deaf. Perhaps it was the same assumption that led another teacher to react with amazement when the deaf student earned an "A" grade on the first exam in his class. Thankfully, today his paper is returned without incident, and the rest of the period passes uneventfully.

During the afternoon, there is a rally in the gym. The deaf student arrives early, choosing a seat on one of the lower bleachers, where he will be close enough to see the speakers and the interpreter. Students stream in through doors on both sides of the building. It isn't long before the bleachers are jam-packed with talking, laughing, cheering students. The building is fairly bursting with spirited shouting, dynamic energy, and animated conversations. But no one talks with the deaf student. Set apart by silence, he cannot enter the world of words around him. Only an observer, behind a quiet barrier, he is alone in the crowd.

*Hurwitz, T. Alan, "Growing Up In Mainstreamed Education: Reflections of a Deaf Person," *The Deaf American*, 1983, Vol. 35, No. 8, pp. 15-18.

A Mother's Story . . . by Irma D. Sawyer

When our first child, a girl, was born in 1940, she looked and seemed normal until she started talking. At times, I noticed she didn't seem to hear me, but at first I thought she just had her mind on other things. Then as time went on I knew for sure she couldn't hear me. I carried her to several doctors trying to find out the trouble but none of them could find anything wrong. There was no infection, and no apparent reason for her trouble. In 1945, another girl was born, with the same hearing problems as her sister.

It was when they started to school, however, that troubles really began. They tried reading each teacher's lips to know what she was saying. Since they had to be seated in the front of the classroom, some of the other children made fun of them. Some days they would come home crying because someone had laughed at them, because they had answered wrong. It would really hurt them and me. Also, I was still trying to find out why they could not hear, and we even carried them to Duke Hospital/Medical Center. There, they had speech lessons, yet the doctors could not find the trouble.

Our boy was born seven years later, and we hoped and prayed that he would not be the same way, but unfortunately he was.

Finally, before our fourth child was born, the doctors checked me for the RH blood factor. This was a new test, and I had never been checked for it. They found my blood was RH negative, which causes a handicap or death to some children unless the husband has a negative blood also. Tests at Memorial Hospital in Chapel Hill showed my husband's blood was RH positive. My brother, then a medical student at the hospital, asked me to bring the children there and have them checked at the speech and hearing center. There we learned each had a high tone hearing loss. All of them also had over 70% loss in the same ear, with about 50% loss in the other. The doctors were amazed that all four were handicapped in the very same way and they said these were the first such cases in their files.

Most children of RH opposite parents are different, and some have to have a change of blood, while others do not live at all. According to the doctors, the RH opposite blood was the only thing in our family history that could have caused the hearing loss. We were also told that it was something that the children would have to live with all their lives, because no operations or hearing aids would help. The hearing aids would make sounds louder, but they would not change the way the children heard the words and sounds, as they could not hear any high tone letters in words or high tone sounds, such as t's, s's, or they were unable to hear such sounds as a telephone ringing, or a horn or a whistle blowing. Therefore, they could not pronounce their words correctly because they pronounced them as they heard them.

They all had to have speech lessons, so they had to memorize the sounds of words, and only by lipreading, could they do this.

Some of their teachers were very nice about their handicaps, always being sure that they could see their lips, when they were talking to the class. Of course, there were some of the teachers and children in their classes who didn't take the trouble to remember. I remember one of them having a seventh grade teacher, who along with the students made fun of her, because she couldn't pronounce her words right. I talked to the teachers, trying to make them understand and have them seat my children close to the front.

Once when the youngest child, a girl, started to school, her teacher didn't believe that she could not hear. She told her that she just didn't want to pay attention. One day this teacher laid her across her lap and whipped her because she thought she wasn't paying attention. She came home crying, with stripes on her back-end. She was so upset that she never got over this terrible experience. I was furious, and upset also, and cried with her. I went to the school the next morning and talked with the principal and the teacher. Naturally the teacher was right in the eyes of the principal. Finally, I carried her again to Chapel Hill and had her doctors write to the schools and the health office, explaining the children's handicaps. These were just a few of the things that kept me upset and bewildered.

After that experience, my child never liked school again and cried every morning because she didn't want to go. Even when her teachers were understanding, the other children would laugh at the way she talked. Sometimes she was scolded for not being able to understand the teacher because she couldn't see her lips, and she would have a severe attack of nervous asthma. Each time I would have to be called from work to take her to the doctor, and always he would say it came from nerves.

Finally, her doctor at Chapel Hill suggested we try hearing aids to make the sounds louder, but of course they wouldn't make the pronunciation any better. However, I was willing to try anything to help them. We bought four hearing aids at \$375.00 each, which was a very large sum for us. Somehow, we managed to get them although we had to pay for them by installment plans. The hearing aids only made it worse for them at first because they could hear so many other noises in the classrooms that they couldn't keep their minds on the lessons. They soon got used to using them, at least the three older ones did, but they still had to read lips for sounds in the high tone bracket.

Finally, when the youngest child was in the third grade, she had one of the most wonderful, understanding teachers. Her husband was an instructor at a technical institute. So

together, she, her husband and two men at the college rigged up an electric box like a radio, with the loud and low controls. To this, they attached earphones for my child to place on her ears. Then they attached a microphone with a cord that would reach all the way across the classroom and all the way lengthwise. The teacher then could walk around the room and talk, and my daughter could hear her talking through the microphone. Of course, this helped the teacher more than it did her because she still couldn't hear the high tone letters, but at least the teacher didn't have to be standing near her all the time. She used this box until she started into junior high. Then she was embarrassed to use it, so she went back to the hearing aid. Finally, she got used to it, and from then on, in spite of some bad days, she got along much better in high school.

My children always got very good grades in school in spite of what they had to go through, and they knew that they had to pay close attention to be able to get these grades which they all did. This, I was very proud of. Now they are all grown, and now that I've done all I could to help them and the love I had for them helped me to conquer all the work, heartaches and trouble I went through. In spite of the struggles, however, I think their handicaps have strengthen-

ed their wills to go forward and that they can see that the ones they were hurt by only hurt the _____?

Message from the Children . . .

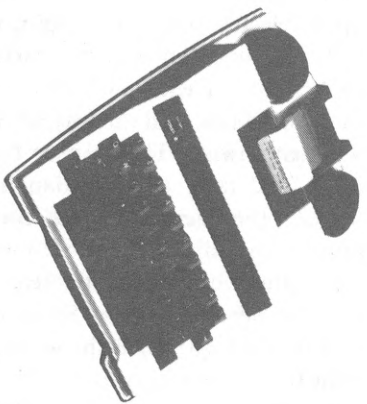
Mama faced a special challenge in raising four children with disabilities.

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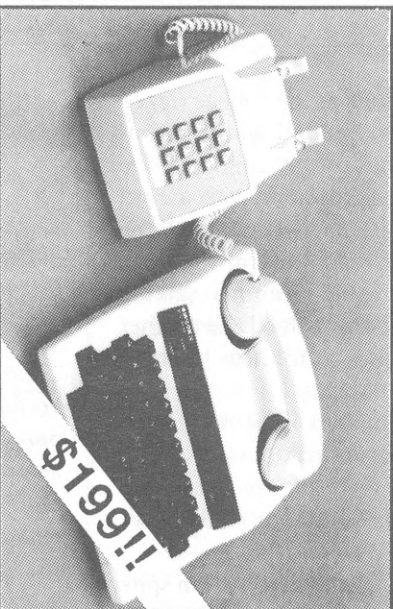
Mama has left a legacy of love, determination and accomplishment that will live on in her children and grandchildren. We acknowledge to her a debt that we can never repay fully except in the fulfillment of our own lives and those of our children.

*Your children,
Jean, Kay, Judy and Teddy*



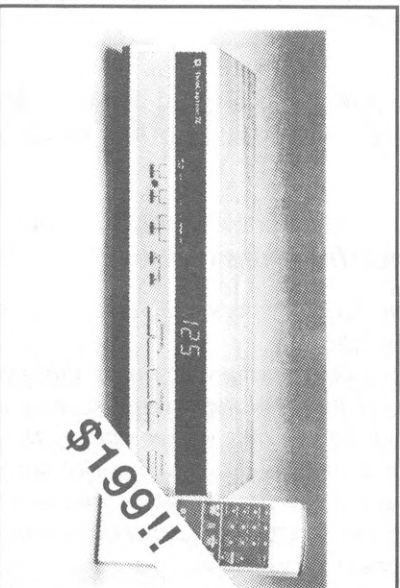
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A Book Review

Book Review . . .

. . . by Another Hearing Child of Deaf Parents

A Loss for Words: The Story of Deafness in a Family by Lou Ann Walker.
Harper & Row, 1986, \$15.95.

I read Lou Ann Walker's *A Loss for Words* with great interest, as we are passengers in the same boat: eldest children of deaf parents. My brother Adam and I were blessed to have as parents Elizabeth (deafened at 10 from spinal meningitis) and John (deafened at two from mumps) Spellman. Much of what Walker writes strikes me as true and typical of growing up in a Deaf household. But in many, many ways Walker seems to have missed the fun and fascination I experienced.

A Loss for Words is right on when describing the prosaic details of a Deaf home. Our families both had flashing doorlights instead of ringing doorbells, and TTYs so our parents could use the phone. We even had specific sorts of incidents in common.

Unlike Walker, I never had the problem of being locked out of the house, as our family had installed a swinging door in the back hall for a basset hound. On those occasions when I found myself locked out, I was able to wriggle in through Damon's door. (This method worked well into my twenties, a solid ongoing argument against nautilus training.) My father was too big to manage this feat, however. One time when he came home, from his midnight shift as a linotypist at the *Providence Journal*, he had to jimmy open a kitchen window and crawl in. This is why you don't often read of deaf burglars. They can't hear a family's basset hound growling a warning before attaching himself tooth-to-leg to an intruder. At least Dad learned Damon was a conscientious watchdog.

Walker describes the suspicions she had as a girl that her parents were not deaf at all, but actually were spies. I laughed in recognition throughout this section, as it is so completely true of my own experience. Adam and I, at around 9, 10 and 11 years old, had the same fantasies of familial espionage. "Mom and Dad **must** be spies," it was so elegantly explanatory. Just who they were spying for, who or what they were spying on, and the reason behind their being under deep cover in Cranston, Rhode Island, was never clear. But the notion that they were in fact hearing held an irresistible allure. So we, too, conducted tests of our parents' deafness. Typically, we would quietly sneak up directly behind Dad while he was reading, then emit blood-curdling banshee screams. His awesome lack of recognition was always and only a testament to the quality of his training, never an indication of actual deafness. To this day it remains a running inside joke to Adam and me that maybe, just maybe . . .

Children of deaf parents "get away" with all sorts of stuff, and this has always been a source of envy among our

friends. Adam and I were forever arguing (we are exceptionally verbal, and verbally combative, which is certainly ironic). We argued in the back seat of the car all the way from Rhode Island to California, where our folks went for their master's degrees, and, months later, we argued all the way back again. We screamed at each other over dinner, using a trip to the fridge as an excuse to turn our backs and holler and curse. We, especially Adam, played music and the TV and radio at ear-splitting volume. We didn't worry about waking the folks when we staggered home at 4:00 a.m. We didn't always have to respond when called.

On the other hand . . . when a fuse blew, we couldn't hold a conversation in the darkness to figure out which fuse was the problem. We couldn't from the living room ask Mom and Dad in the kitchen what's for dinner. We had to plan carefully rides and meetings in advance; there's no ad libbing plans when it's not possible to phone home. (One reaction to this is my own life is an undiminishing love for doing things on the spur of the moment, and a great reluctance to plan dates or dinner or meeting friends more than an absolutely minimum amount of time in advance.)

As the eldest children in our families, Lou Ann Walker and I were both called upon to negotiate and mediate between our deaf parents and "the world." The experience, I imagine, is similar to that of the oldest children of immigrant parents; the Deaf, to many, perhaps most, hearing are permanent foreigners and outsiders. Walker, I felt, portrayed the eldest child's role as a burden, while I thought of it as a duty. Now I can see it as a privilege as well, an entrance into a fascinating and vibrant culture. I enjoyed it, though at the same time I understood clearly the concomitant weight of responsibility, the **power** of being my parents' go-between with the world. Adults treated me as an adult (they had no choice) when I was a nine-year-old kid. What Walker experienced as primarily a burden I felt was something not without rewards and enjoyment.

Nor does Walker seem to see the connectedness she shares with her parents that is unavailable to other people, particularly their relatives. As in my family, an enormous gulf separates the deaf from their parents, siblings, aunts, uncles, cousins; it is a gulf that these hearing people as a rule are as unable or as unwilling to bridge as the Deaf. It is a gift for their children to have access to their parents' special world. Walker doesn't see how her relatives were jealous of this gift and acted out their resentment by way of butting in and attempting to control her parents (and herself, by their constant

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admonishments to "be good" and "look after" her parents). Walker rightly resents their intrusions, but doesn't understand what she has that they cannot have.

Walker goes on at length about the limitations of communicating with the deaf. I have the rare experience of having deaf parents whose command of English exceeds mine. While I am pressed to write a limerick (A deaf man who lived in Pawtucket . . .), my Mom successfully attempts structurally perfect sonnets. Dad's English, too, was excellent, the accomplishment the greater for the earlier onset of his deafness.

What Dad was most skilled at, what I loved most, was his narrative ability. He was a brilliant raconteur. Many Deaf are, as American Sign Language is a particularly good storytelling language, and deaf culture values entertaining story telling. This love of well-told tales is something shared with Native American culture. Like Native Americans, the Deaf have collectively a marvelous sense of humor: dry, wittily acerbic, mimetic, incisive, comically and subversively aware of the group's minority status. It is a perfect tool for pointing up the foibles of the majority and its attitudes toward the minority. Walker captures well the fluidity and sheer interest-iness of sign language.

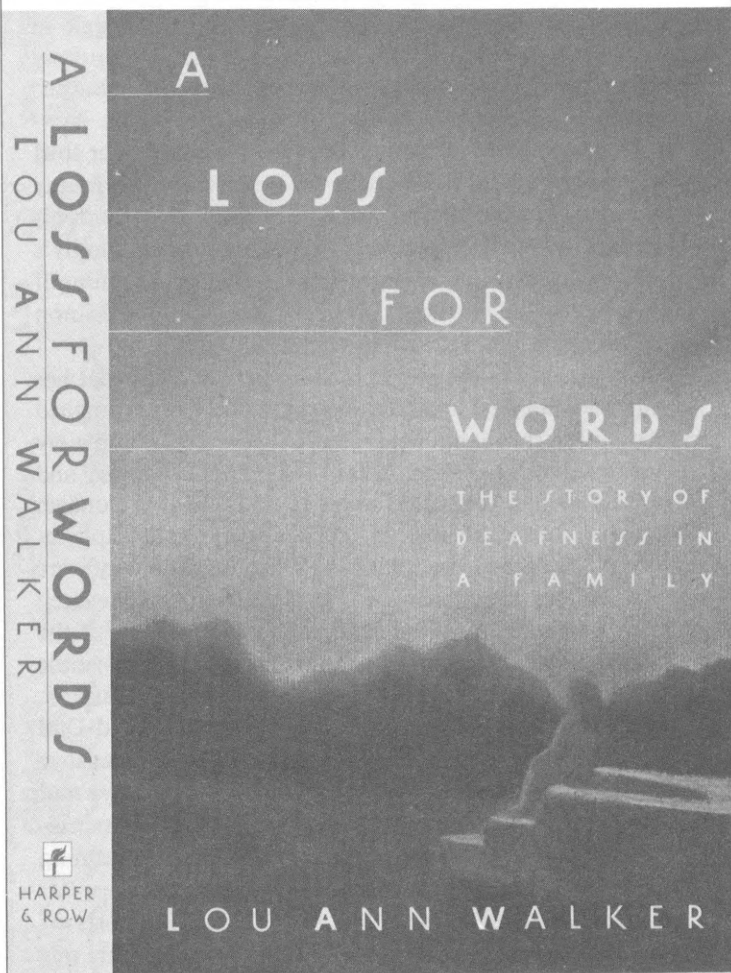
The single thing most difficult for me to accept in Walker's book was its underlying, morose view of deafness and the Deaf. I find the Deaf to be warm, open, garrulous, joyful. Take in a production of the National Theatre of the deaf and you will understand what I mean. But Walker writes that "the best that can be said for deafness is that it's an invisible handicap." I hardly think this is the best that can be said for it. She denies what is remarkable and glorious in Deaf culture.

She also writes that "deafness is . . . a void. It is the lack of something. Not the presence of anything." Well, I disagree. There is in the experience, I believe, something not there for the hearing, a method of apprehending the world directly without the mitigation of language. Metaphor gets end-run around and experience becomes wholly immediate. I see this in the sure and instantaneous expression of emotion in the Deaf: joy, anger, frustration, love, all are immediately present, felt and expressed at practically the same instant. This, of course, is a mixed blessing: pain unmitigated (I think of Walker's description of her mother's grief at her own father's funeral) can overwhelm. But in a true and genuine way the Deaf live life in an immediate and real way that is unavailable to cautious, detached hearing folk.

Deafness also, I think, is neutral, not unrelentingly negative as per Walker. It doesn't confer or deny nobility. There are Deaf who ably negotiate the world, doing so with poise and dignity. There are those who do not, and those who cannot. The same holds for the hearing. One's ability to negotiate life is a function of nurture as well as nature, of individual rigor and integrity as well as particular circumstances which ease or obstruct. Walker, as I read her, sees deafness as worse than disability; it is, to her, crippling. My exper-

ience of my parents is different, and my experience of the elder Walkers is very different. I don't see their deafness as crippling, an unrelenting negative. I see in her parents a fire of integrity, dignity and personal forthrightness in the face of difficulty. When Walker describes her father's visit to the *New York Times* (he is a printer by profession), it is clear he is quite able to negotiate the hearing world, overcoming the disinterest and reluctance of a hearing guard to get what he wants.

A story like this is not atypical of the Deaf. Here's a similar tale: Now and again, due to her wont for exceeding speed limits, my Mom will get pulled over by a state trooper. She will then play so infuriatingly "dumb" as to make it very much easier on the trooper simply to wave her on than try to deal with her. (One time she didn't get away with it because Adam, passengering, burst out laughing at the charade and spilled the beans.) This, of course, is appalling, at least to some people. It's also hilarious, though if you've never been in a position of relative powerlessness, you may not see why. What better payback than to use the agency of one's supposed "weakness" as a weapon against authority?



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Walker writes that "deafness . . . made us compliant, unable to resist authority." It had the opposite effect in my family: it seemed Mom and Dad were forever challenging and upsetting the status quo, pushing the hearing world to accommodate better and acknowledge their deafness. Adam and I inherited their questioning of authority. Adam more openly and defiantly and I more passive-aggressively (this is in the pattern of the Walkers' younger and oldest children) resist conformity, societal expectations and the unquestioning following of orders. We and our parents have always been pains in the a--, and right (and occasionally perversely) proud of it. I don't believe this is solely a function of deafness in the family, nor is the Walkers' mode of acquiescence. It has as much to do with our family being Eastern, urban, well-educated and politicized, and Walkers' being Midwestern and rural, the folks' education limited to a lock-step residential school for the Deaf. The presence of deafness may accentuate or de-emphasize particular tendencies within us, but I don't believe it wholly creates or negates any characteristics. It affects us; it doesn't effect us. I just don't think deafness has made us really different, and I don't relate to Walker's guilt, her "feeling that society thought it was some kind of sin to be deaf." Other people's ignorance is not my responsibility (though it is in my and my parents' interest to combat it).

Walker had long experience interpreting in the New York City area, and her work brought her into close, extended contact with the deaf underclass, those with minimal language skills, education and vocational abilities. The picture of deaf culture that emerges is too narrow; it's like taking the South Bronx as the sole representation of New York City. She missed the joyousness of Deaf culture. I'm troubled by the pity underlying much of Walker's account, and I also feel for Walker herself, so caught up in feeling herself inadequate to the impossible task of integrating the Deaf into the hearing world that she can't appreciate her own clearly immense interpreting abilities and sensitivity to the Deaf.

A Loss for Words is full of wonderful details and telling

anecdotes, but I found its depiction of deafness within the family not representative of my own. Hers is a book worth reading, but with the understanding that her experience is far from universal.—John F. Spellman, III, 396 Seventh, Apartment 3L, Brooklyn, NY 11215.



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Lou Ann Walker studied comparative literature as an undergraduate at Harvard, and also holds a degree from L'Université de Besançon, in France. She has worked on the staff at *New York, Esquire, Cosmopolitan, Diversion*, and *Direct* magazines, and she has written articles for *The New York Times, Esquire, American Health*, and *People*, as well as many other national publications. A recipient of a Rockefeller Foundation Humanities grant to research the subject of hearing children of deaf parents, she currently lives in New York City and East Hampton, New York.

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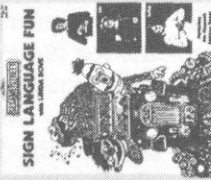
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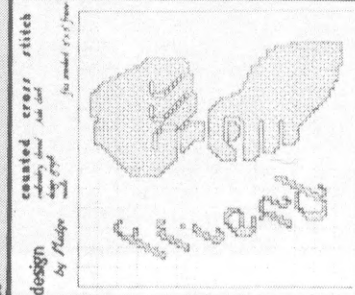
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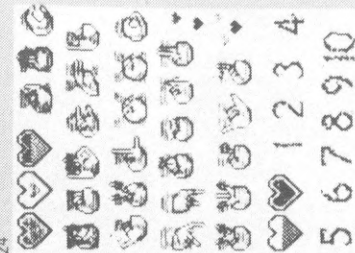
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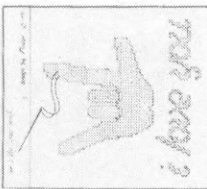
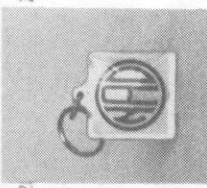
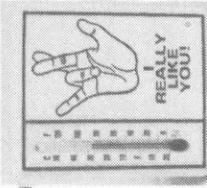
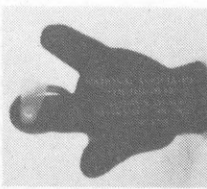
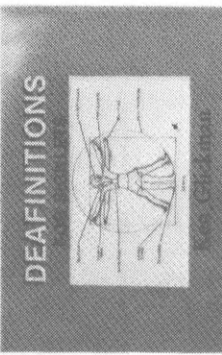
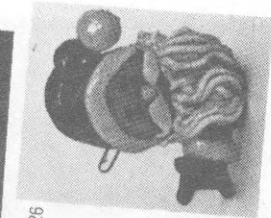
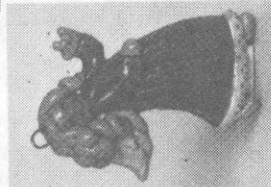
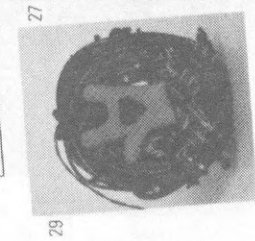
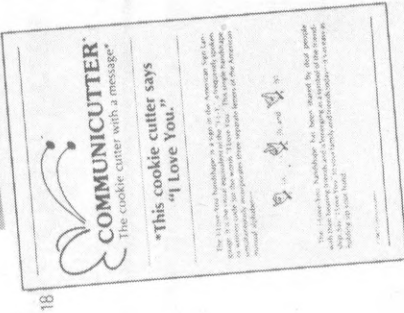
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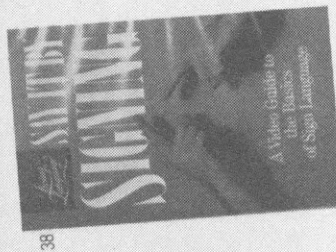
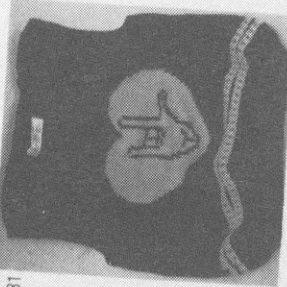
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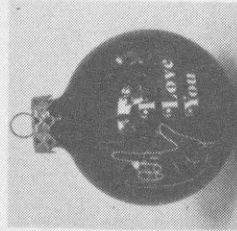
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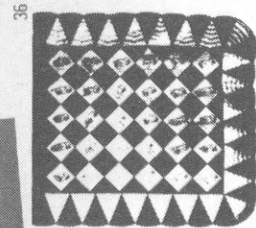
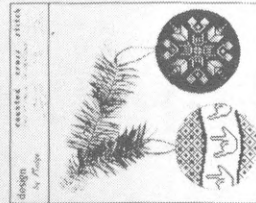
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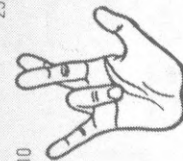
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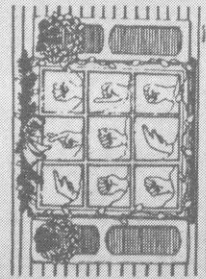
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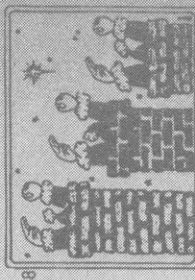
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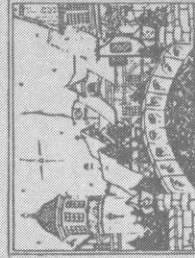
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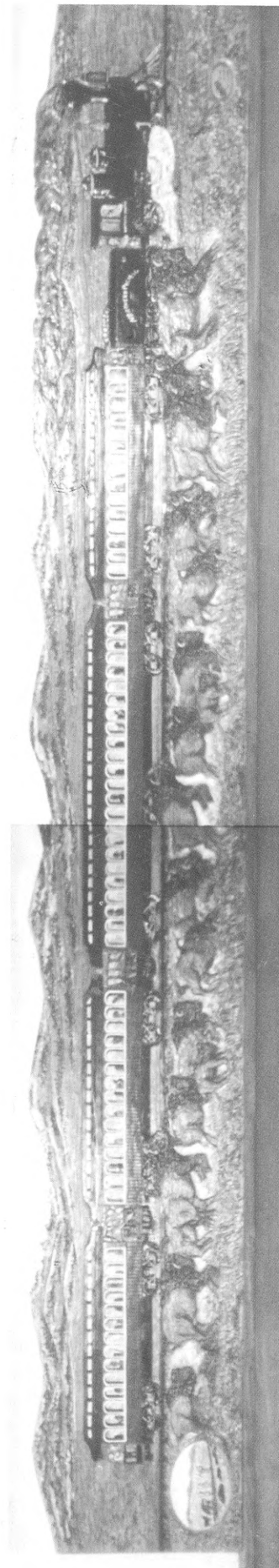
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